

Meeting #7 Summary

Ford Site Planning Task Force members present: Carole Faricy, Co-Chair, William Klein, Co-Chair, Peter Armstrong, Shawn Bartsh, James Bricher, Richard Broderick, Terri Dooher Fleming, Judy Mitchell (for CP Rail's David Drach), Charles Hathaway, Deborah Karasov, Angela Kline, Scott Malcolm, Gary Marx, Lance Neckar, Jim Reinitz, Dennis Rosemark, Dave Sellergren, Stuart Simek, Morgan Tamsky, Stephanie Warne, Ellen Watters, Pam Wheelock **Absent:** Ronnie Brooks, Matthew Schruerger, Bruce Valen,

City Staff, others agency reps or consultants present: Cecile Bedor (PED), Patty Lilledahl (PED), Merritt Clapp-Smith (PED), Luis Pereira (PED), Ward 3 Councilmember Pat Harris, John Marshall (Ward 3), Bill Vitek (EDAW), Bob Close and Bruce Jacobson (Close Landscape Architects), David Graham (ESG), Fred Dock (Iteris), Caren Dewar (Dewar), Lorrie Louder and Monte Hilleman (Port Authority).

Others Attending (based on meeting sign-in sheet): Becky Cantanello, Gary Fischbach, Karla and mat Hollinshead, Irene Jones, Henry Waldenberger, Susan Kimberly, Jane McClure, Tim Nelson, Michael Belaen, Lynn Hinkle, and Charles Nelson.

Meeting called to order by co-chair Carole Faricy at 6:36 PM. Faricy discussed how an area neighbor had contacted PED staff to communicate their deep concerns about the proposed extension of a new road across the Ford site to connect to Finn Street, which had appeared in one of the 10 land use schemes under consideration by the Ford Site Planning Task Force (TF). Faricy noted that she understood public concerns about this proposal, but that it was an oversight by the Consultant Team, who did not know the history about this street when they created the land use schemes. It would be corrected in future schemes. She also asked the TF if they might be interested in adding an additional TF meeting for June 11, 2007.

Cecile Bedor, PED director, announced that she had talked with the mayor to clarify his goals related to job creation on the Ford site. The mayor's vision was for a range of well-paying jobs for people with a range of income and educational levels (from GEDs up through higher levels of education). This might include industrial or other types of jobs. He said the challenge to the TF was to think innovatively about design of potential light industrial on the site, not following a typical "suburban industrial" model, with the typical low rise buildings surrounded by a lot of surface parking. The physical form of industrial/light manufacturing may be evolving differently now.

A TF member asked about whether the TF had ever received a tax base breakdown of residential and industrial property. Partly in response, Monte Hilleman of the Port Authority gave a presentation to the TF about how the Port does brownfield redevelopment, including the types of industrial land uses and their physical building forms/design, and the related impacts on the surrounding area and tax base. Hilleman stated that given the scarcity of industrial land in Saint Paul, it is difficult to attract companies to create well-paying light industrial jobs, which are critical to a diverse employment base and "urban village" concept. He stated that mixing in industrial land uses at the Ford site would create less traffic impacts than the higher intensity uses like office, retail, and higher density residential. The Port Authority model requires: 1) a minimum of 1 job per 1,000 square feet of building, 2) a minimum of 35% building coverage, 3) a minimum of \$60/square foot of building construction cost, and 4) a minimum wage of \$10.50/hour, in addition to benefits. The past 8 business centers have resulted in an average wage of \$17.50/hour. All Port Authority businesses are also required to enter in to a 10-year workforce agreement. A typical Port Authority light industrial job creates \$1,632 in annual property taxes for the City, while a typical 50,000 square foot light industrial building would generate about \$110,000 in annual property taxes for the City. A newer zone district called "Light Industrial Restricted" (IR) allows high-tech, medical manufacturing,

and “flex tech” uses, incorporates design and parking standards, and requires both screening of outdoor storage areas and loading/service areas. Hilleman gave photo examples of recent Port Authority light industrial projects in the City, emphasizing the IR design standards, and recommended to the TF that 30-50 acres of the Ford site be allotted for such uses (including high-tech/green/value-added manufacturing, medical industry, and other service-based businesses). Such acreage could result in 675 to 1,140 light industrial jobs, in addition to employment from other land uses on the site.

Discussion points from the TF included:

- Job creation was a goal originally, and this info from the Port Authority was useful
- Upon being questioned, Hilleman estimated the average value of industrial land at \$71/square foot
- A question if IR zoning includes controls on energy usage and emissions. It currently does not
- A TF member comment that Scheme 5 might create up to \$48 million in building value (1/3 of the site)
- A question to Hilleman about where the most appropriate place to put industrial on the site might be. Hilleman responded saying that geology, water, and environmental contamination on the site will drive such a decision, but that locating such uses on the interior of the site (central/east) would likely be ok.
- A question about the Developer Panels, which had indicated little industrial demand on the site. Hilleman responded saying that some demand is there, and that Ryan and Opus are developers that do not often work in Saint Paul
- A point from the Ford representative on the TF that in the Port Authority’s deals, land often sells for \$1. Hilleman responded by saying that the land value is paid for by the Port, and cleaned up
- Regarding a previous TF member point about the need to examine energy usage and emissions with the potential redevelopment, another TF member said that performance criteria could be put on the site by also applying a Planned (Unit) Development over the base zoning. Massing, scale, and other criteria might be included as well. Hilleman indicated that while the Port Authority is not experienced with this zoning tool, it is willing to work with it. He also added that the Port requires its qualifying businesses to go through a “green design process” via Xcel Energy. The recommendations that emerge are outcomes that are negotiable with the business
- Responding to a question about how far out into the future industrial land demand could be projected, Hilleman affirmed that there is current industrial demand, but not necessarily a waiting list. He also added that it was hard to project very far into the future on this. Another TF member wondered whether the 3M site on the East Side might be a better fit for industrial land
- Another TF member asked if office/institutional land uses might not provide more and better-paying jobs than industrial land uses. To this, Hilleman agreed, but noted that the larger traffic impacts of typical office uses
- Regarding land value, Hilleman stated that industrial land values were more fixed and less flexible. In general, industrial uses typically support lower land costs. The Port Authority typically invests \$15/s.f. land in Saint Paul (for site assembly, land preparation, and environmental cleanup costs). As a response to Hilleman’s statements, a TF member asked if given the assumed high value of the land at the Ford site, whether the site’s competitiveness for industrial uses would likely be lost due to very high land costs. Hilleman responded by saying that it was too early to talk a lot about land value, given the site’s unknowns (contamination, etc.)
- The point that the public and TF have a historical notion of industrial as a heavy use with a lot of hauling and semi trucks associated with it, and if it would be better to really distinguish between commercial or light industrial use and heavy industry
- Ford’s representative on the TF said that while Ford is not trying to rule out industrial reuse, it is important to make sure that the new uses will pay for the land

Lynn Hinkle, UAW member, spoke next about the progress of the Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) Task Force. The State of MN is currently moving towards funding a green manufacturing study. Hinkle also reported the existence of a Green Manufacturing Initiative, onto which Mayors Coleman/Rybak have signed. Hinkle said that he would make the mission statement and PHEV Task Force handout available to the TF by email.

Jim Reinitz, TF member and UAW member, reported that the UAW had now purchased a Ford Ranger truck and given it to a local inventor named Bob Albertson. Albertson plans on replacing this truck's engine with an electric motor, including high tech batteries that charge themselves from bumps in the road. The UAW plan on unveiling the electric truck at the Minnesota State Fair this summer, and hope to convince Ford Motor Co. or some other manufacturer to save the prospect of auto manufacturing at the Ford plant by building electric cars at the site. More info available at <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2007/05/16/electricranger/?rsssource=1>.

Next, TF members had a chance to discuss freely the 10 land use schemes as presented by the Consultant Team to the TF at a previous meeting. TF members were skeptical about voting on the schemes and had a series of comments:

- The evaluation matrix was too long and laborious
- That the TF members could not really evaluate the schemes on the basis of economic viability, as they had not yet received info on this. Another TF member stated that there also had not yet been adequate numbers presented to the TF on traffic impacts
- A comment on the need to consider the entire context, not just the site
- The possibility of eliminating mixed use institutional
- That the evaluation matrix, though very long, helps separate the various land use mixes from their designs. It takes time, but yields finely calibrated outcomes, and is therefore worth the TF members' time to print it and out and fill it out.
- Some consensus emerged about the need to make a catalog of TF members' "favorite" elements across the schemes, and to make them explicit. Merritt Clapp-Smith, PED project manager, responded by saying that she is struggling with this idea, as the second phase of this process would analyze the 5 land use scenarios, and each one would have to be sufficiently different enough to represent a real range of scenarios
- Other TF members said they thought they ought to prioritize the key elements at the meeting tonight. Others said they thought they ought to distinguish between the elements that they like and dislike. Another TF member said he agreed, but thought they ought to list their questions about each element identified as well
- Ford's representative on the TF reminded the rest of the group about not forgetting the highest/best use for the property. While it is currently industrial, there ought to be a testing of the various percentages of land uses on the site to determine this. Another TF member responded by saying that the definition of highest/best use of the property varies, based on whether it's Ford or the community making the determination.

List of Fundamental Elements for Site Redevelopment – by topic area (and number of votes)

River and Natural Resources - 19

Respect and follow Critical Area zoning – 9

Enhance green interface with the river – 6

River valley highlighted – 4

River side of bluff remains public space

Jobs / Industry - 16

Reuse 25-30% of the site for light industrial – 7

Majority of site remains industrial / jobs producing – 4

Jobs that pay good wages for the site – 3

"Green" middle-class jobs for the site – 2

Site Design / Redevelopment - 16

Site layout and design that is flexible for the future – 6
Design to mirror surrounding context; don't be an island - 5
People in area see redevelopment as an improvement – 5

Economic Return / Market - 12

Future land use choice offers an appropriate value to the property owner – 6
Achieve optimal return on investment for taxpayer \$ spent – 5
Land uses should reinforce each other in a market context – 1

Rail Corridor – 11 / Transportation - 9

Use rail corridor – 4
Retain rail corridor for transit – 2
Retain rail for transit and traffic – 2
Include intermodal transit within the site – 2
Convert rail corridor to a road connecting with Shepard Road – 1

Minimize traffic impacts from site – 4

Maintain character and low speeds on Mississippi River Blvd, and minimize curb cuts – 3
Reweave the street grid – 2
Encourage shared parking structures

Recreation - 4

Little League fields somewhere on the site, with adjacent parking – 2
Active recreation in addition to baseball – 2

Miscellaneous - 15

Keep new retail on Ford Pkwy – 6
Range of housing types – 4
Things on site that reinforce and support educational institutions – 2
Onsite research and training
Historical tribute feature on the site to Ford plant and its workers – 2
Use sustainable storm water treatment systems – 1
Future flexible green infrastructure

Bill Vitek, Consultant Team member, asked whether the TF was okay with the Consultant Team taking in these comments and trying to narrow down the 10 schemes into 5 working land use scenarios. The TF agreed with this, and also agreed to an additional TF meeting for June 11, 2007.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.